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REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, the Examiner continues to maintain portions of previous rejections that are no longer relevant. For example, the Examiner states "Dobbins discloses the system with ... receiving the packets at one of incoming service interfaces", yet also states in the same paragraph "However, Yuasa and Dobbins fail to disclose ... receiving the packets at one of incoming service interfaces." The Examiner also continues to treat every claim under the heading of the same rejection, and is not considering every element of every claim separately. The Examiner has also presented arguments and counter-arguments in a style which is difficult to understand, such as at page 6:

> Thus Dobbins clearly discloses a method and system for selecting a forwarding rule "reads on an access rule "policing information" such as do not forward or forward and determining a path "reads on routing topology"...

The use of the term "reads on" with this particular punctuation makes it difficult to understand the Examiner's arguments. In addition, this particular sentence is seven lines long and appears to address at leave five elements.

The Examiner is once again kindly requested to provide an Office Action which is current, addresses the claims and elements separately, and uses a style which is not confusing. Nevertheless, the Applicant will attempt to respond to the present Office Action.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-8 and 11-21 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,085,238 issued to Yuasa, US Patent 5,825,772 issued to Dobbins, and US Patent 5,845,091 issued to Dunne.

Claim 1 includes the feature of selecting an appropriate forwarding rule based on a source address in said packets and on the incoming service interface from which the packets are received. The Examiner states that this element is taught by Dunne at element 1305 of Figure 13, which teaches selecting forwarding rules based on source IP address, by simply amending the previous Office Action to say that Dunne "implicitly discloses forwarding rule is selected by input interface which the packet is received". However, contrary to the

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Examiner's assertion, there is nothing which implies selecting a forwarding rule based on the incoming service interface from which the packet is received. Dunne teaches only that the forwarding list is selected based on the source IP address (text of box 1305 of Figure 13; column 6 lines 10-12). Dunne does not disclose selecting a forwarding rule based on the incoming service interface, and there is no suggestion in Dunne that this should be done. Referring to Figure 12 and column line 45 to column 6 line 5, it is seen that Dunne distinguishes the originating subnetworks A-F only by their respective IP addresses: "By expanding the criteria of the described function to include the source IP address, a forwarding list may be separately defined for each of the subnetworks A-F". As explained in response to the previous Office Action, Dunne uses different forwarding lists only to establish different routes through the entire network, and not to determine different destinations. There is therefore no need to consider anything other than the source IP address when selecting a forwarding rule, as Dunne considers this sufficient to distinguish the originating subnetworks A-F. In contrast, because claim 1 of the present application considers the incoming service interface from which a packet is received when selecting a forwarding rule, distinct and isolated user networks are enabled, and allow each distinct and isolated user network to re-use destination addresses. Selecting an appropriate forwarding rule based on the incoming service interface from which a packet is received is not taught by Dunne or even suggested by Dunne, and is in no way implied by Dunne since Dunne presents no reason why one would want to do this.

Claim 8 includes the limitation that the multiple forwarding rules are particular to their respect service interfaces. The Examiner has not shown where this element is taught by the cited references. The Examiner may be implying that this is taught by Dunne at the same passage as discussed above with reference to claim 1 (element 1305 of Figure 13), but as discussed above Dunne does not teach this element.

Claims 2-7 and 11-21 are variously dependent on claims 1 and 8, and include the same limitations discussed above.

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Because the Examiner has not shown where each and every element of claims 1-8 and 11-21 are taught by Yuasa, Dobbins, or Dunne, either alone or in combination, the Applicant respectfully submits that a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established against claims 1-8 and 11-21.

In response to the Applicant's response to the previous Office Action, the Examiner states at paragraph 4 on page 6 that "one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references." It is true that an Applicant cannot attack an obviousness rejection by arguing that each cited reference individually does not teach all of the elements of the claims. However the Applicant respectfully submits that when considering the individual elements of the claims, if the Examiner cites only one of the references as teaching a particular element then it is perfectly acceptable to argue that the particular reference does not teach the particular element. In both the previous response and the current response, the Applicant attacks the Examiner's assertion that a particular element is taught by one of the references, and also argues that the Examiner has not shown where each and every element of each claim is taught by the references, either alone or in combination.
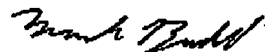
In response to the Applicant's response to the previous Office Action, the Examiner discusses at paragraph 5 of page 7 the "applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning". The Applicant does not believe that such an argument was presented in response to the previous Office Action, and respectfully asks the Examiner to confine any future responses to arguments raised by the Applicant in order to simplify prosecution.

In response to the Applicant's response to the previous Office Action, the Examiner discusses at paragraph 6 of page 7 the "applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references". The Applicant does not believe that such an argument was presented in response to the previous Office Action, and respectfully asks the Examiner to confine any future responses to arguments raised by the Applicant in order to simplify prosecution.

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In view of the foregoing, it is believed that the claims at present on file are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and action to this end is respectfully requested.

            Respectfully submitted,

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